

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of characterizing a system, the method comprising:

logging outages of the system;

measuring directly one or more additional indicia associated with each outage, the one or more additional indicia selected from frequency, duration and business impact of the outage; and

calculating a Figure of Merit (FOM) ~~based on~~ by adding contributions of each outage, the outages being weighted in accordance with one of a plurality of relative weight values selected based on [[with]] the associated additional indicia, and wherein each of the relative weight values corresponds to a range of values of the associated additional indicia and wherein each of the relative weighted values differs from other ones of the relative weighted values.

Claims 2 (previously presented): The method of claim, wherein the FOM includes a business impact weighted availability, reliability or maintainability measure.

Claim 3 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the FOM includes a business impact weighted server panic index.

Claim 4 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the outage logging is performed on a system-wide basis.

Claim 5 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the outage logging is performed for individual subsystems, services and functionality of the characterized system.

Claim 6 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the outage logging encodes a level of performance degradation.

Claim 7 (original): The method of claim 1, further comprising:

remotely monitoring the outages and the one or more additional indicia; and performing the FOM calculating off-site from the characterized system.

Claim 8 (original): The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
using the FOM as a factor in an employee compensation scheme.

Claim 9 (original): The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
evaluating a service level commitment using the FOM.

Claim 10 (original): The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
calculating an incentive fee using the FOM.

Claim 11 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the characterized system includes an information system.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A computer program product encoded in one or more computer readable media and comprising:

instructions executable to obtain measure directly event data for one or more monitored systems;

instructions executable to associate elements of the event data with business impacts thereof on the monitored system; and

instructions executable to calculate a Figure of Merit (FOM) including contributions for each event data element, the calculation including multiplying the contributions by a relative weight value corresponding to a particular one of ~~weighted in accordance with~~ the associated business impacts.

Claim 13 (original): The computer program product of claim 12, wherein the event data include one or more of outages, service interruptions and performance degradations of the monitored systems and individual subsystems, services or functionality thereof.

Claim 14 (original): The computer program product of claim 12, wherein the one or more computer readable medium are selected from the set of a disk, tape or other magnetic, optical, or electronic storage medium and a network, wireline, wireless or other communications medium.

Claim 15 (previously presented): A monitoring system comprising:  
an interface to event data that is directly measured for one or more monitored systems or subsystems; means for associating elements of the event data with business impacts thereof; and  
means for calculating a Figure of Merit (FOM) including contributions for the event data weighted in accordance with the associated business impacts.

Claim 16 (original): The monitoring system of claim 15, wherein the means for calculating a Figure of Merit (FOM) includes instructions executable on the monitoring system to weight contributions to an availability, reliability or maintainability index in accordance with the associated business impact of each event on the monitored systems or subsystems.

Claim 17 (original): The monitoring system of claim 15, wherein the event data include incidence and duration of server panics; and wherein the means for calculating a Figure of Merit (FOM) includes instructions executable on the monitoring system to weight contributions of each server panic to a server panic index in accordance a duration thereof.

Claim 18 (original): The monitoring system of claim 15, further comprising:  
one or more state tracking tools executable on one or more of the monitored systems to supply the event data.

Claim 19 (new): A method of monitoring a computer system, comprising:  
accessing log data for the computer system comprising data on occurrences of a monitored event in the computer system;  
determining a set of computational weights for the monitored event, each of the weights being applicable to a range of values of the occurrence data and the weights being based on a business impact valuation of the monitored event;  
calculating a set of index contributions by applying each of the weights to the occurrence data in the corresponding range of values; and  
combining the calculated index contributions to generate a figure of merit.

Claim 20 (new): The method of claim 19, further comprising determining a difference between the figure of merit and a target index and reporting the difference.

Claim 21 (new): The method of claim 19, wherein each of the weights has a different value, whereby each of the ranges of values is given a differing business impact valuation.

Claim 22 (new): The method of claim 19, wherein the monitored event is a server panic, the occurrence data comprises a duration of a server panic, and the ranges of values comprise ranges of duration.

Claim 23 (new): The method of claim 20, further including generating a management decision based on the reported difference and wherein the management decision is selected from the group consisting of a personnel management decision, a compensation level decision, a performance appraisal, a contractual commitment decision, a contractual incentive fee decision relative to the computer system, and a vendor selection decision.